

# MONUMENT

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

## RESIDENTIAL SPECIAL 2008

BELLEMO & CAT  
BIRD DE LA COEUR  
BKK ARCHITECTS  
CANDALEPAS ASSOCIATES  
CHENCHOW LITTLE  
HARTREE + ASSOCIATES  
JOHN WARDLE  
MCBRIDE CHARLES RYAN  
RICHARD KIRK

## CULTURAL AGENDAS:

ABUNDANT AT THE  
VENICE BIENNALE

TIME NOW FOR AN  
AUSTRALIAN CENTRE OF  
ARCHITECTURE



ISSN 1320-1115 • AUG/SEPT 2008  
AUS\$18.50 (INC GST) • NZ\$19.50 (INC GST)  
PRINT POST APPROVED PP 2333807 00013

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COVER Wall House by BKK Architects, photograph Shannon McGrath. THIS PAGE Klein Bottle House by McBride Charles Ryan, photograph John Gollings. Floor: Tretford goat hair carpet in Pomegranate; stairwell wall is Dulux Red Clown on routed mdf



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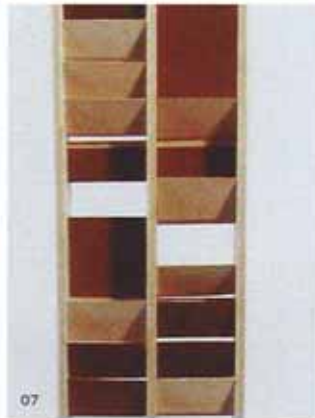
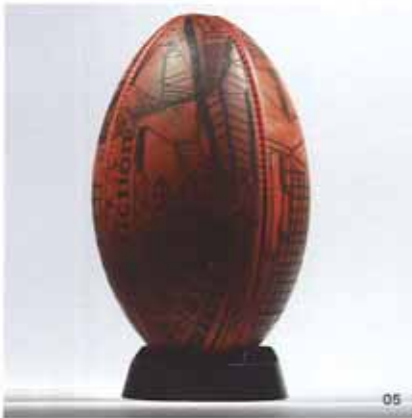
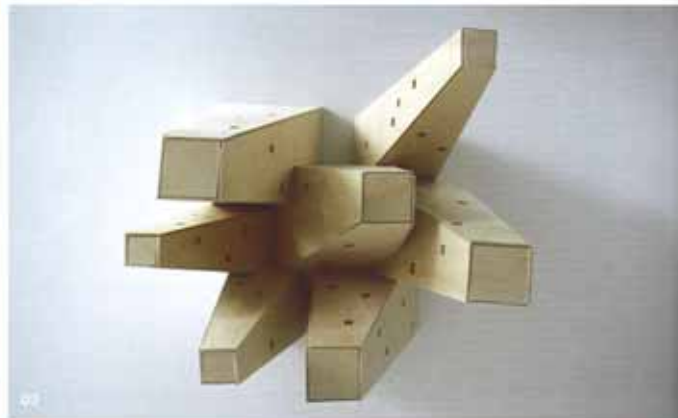


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# VENICE BIENNALE

Some 300 models from 150 Australian practices are seabound for Italy, for Australia's exhibition (*Abundant*) at the 11th Venice Architecture Biennale.





**THOUGH THE 2006** Venice Biennale announced Australia's reappearance at the event after a long absence, the 2008 *Abundant* exhibition promises to properly reintroduce the nation to the global architectural public.

The 2006 exhibition, curated by Shane Murray and Nigel Bertram, was an earnest and measured exploration of Australian architects working in particular urban conditions. The exhibition featured some of the country's strongest practices and a selection of excellent projects completed over the five years or so prior to the exhibition. However, many were unconvinced at the traction of the thesis at an international level, and by all accounts the exhibition experience itself was not particularly compelling in the context of what is on offer at the Biennale event.

The aim of the 2008 Australian curatorial team, consisting of Neil Durbach, Wendy Lewin, Kerstin Thompson, Gary Warner and Vince Frost, is to blow open the limited view other countries may have in regard to the breadth and depth of architectural practice in Australia. This is achieved by a conditioning of the visitors to the exhibition via a selected history of Australian architectural practice, after which they can reflect on an enormous amount of projects currently in production.

Their schematic for the exhibition consists of two parts that, in themselves, attempt >>

#### VENICE MODELLING

01 *Fields Sectional Landscape* by Alice Hampson Architect  
 02 *The Inhabited Fence* by Gerard Murrigh Architect  
 03 *Cubby Conglomerate* by Super Colossal  
 04 Architects Wendy Lewin and Neil Durbach from the Biennale curatorial team  
 05 *Foberge Football* by Lyons  
 06 *Brick Pit Ring* by Durbach Black Architects  
 07 *All Saints Grammar School* by Candalepos Associates  
 08 Architect Kerstin Thompson from the Biennale curatorial team with *Totem Dot* by Lyons and *Stone House* by Gregory Burgess Architects  
 09 *Stone House* by Gregory Burgess Architects  
 10 *Victorian Spore Science Education Centre* by Gregory Burgess Architects



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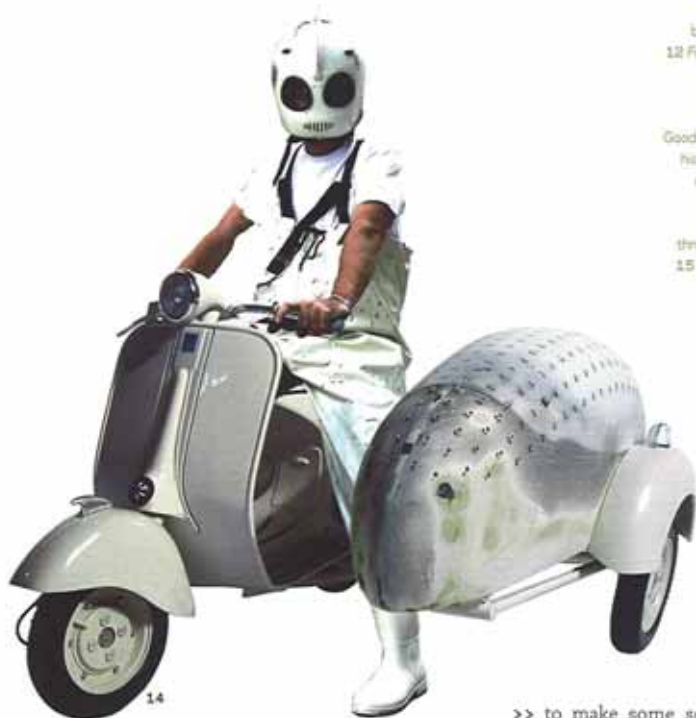
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**VENICE MODELLING**  
 11 Gerard Reinmuth and Karen Tougaard of Terror building Leichhardt House  
 12 Fairhaven Beach House by John Wardle Architects  
 13-14 Architect Richard Goodwin in the studio. Goodwin is photomontage'd on his sci-fi Svedman model of a Vespa with sidecar pod, used for distributing and collecting seeds on trips through the streets of Berlin  
 15 Terror's Leichhardt House



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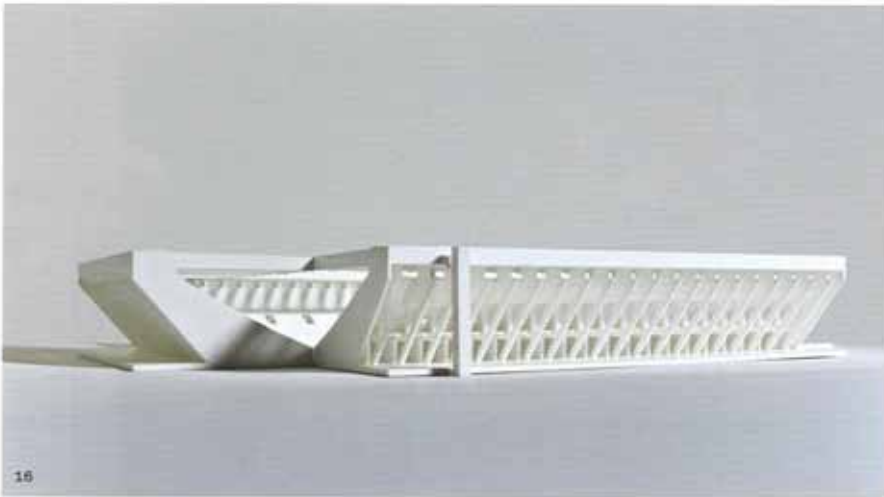
>> to make some sense of the split plan of the exhibition building: in the top pavilion, the curated history of Australian architecture will be presented via largely digital means, providing a context for the enormous array of work presented in the pavilion below.

While, at the time of writing, no information was available on the content and argument behind selections for the history component of the exhibition, it's understood an essay by architectural historian Conrad Hamann will cut a section through the enormous body of work that has, over the past 200 years, attempted to make some sense of what it is to occupy this place, given our initially eurocentric spatial intelligence.

Neil Durbach describes some of the projects completed over this period, a favourite of which is the Hugh Buhrich house in New South Wales,

which he has studied previously. Even though it is 15 years since he exhibited the project, he notes with wonder: "where else could a house like that have happened?". By featuring these projects in an international context, the curatorial team hope to provide new pathways into which the work on display can be understood, while also making a clear statement back to our local profession, where Durbach contends there is "an amazing forgetting" of the breadth and depth of work in this country. This constant cultural amnesia, he suggests, is evidence of a persistent cultural cringe that needs continual overcoming.

The exhibition of new work occurs in physical form only: a field of 300 models on individual aluminum stands. The support for the stands is incredibly fine, such that the >>



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VENICE MODELLING 16 Venice Stadium by Bligh Voller Nield Architecture 17 Sandy Cavill (front) constructs Northbridge Podium and James Du Plessis (back) working on H House for Donovan Hill 18 Model maker John Bellino works on Mr Tom Price Open Cut Museum for Inedale Pedersen Hoek 19 Ribbon in a Park by Neeson Murbitt Architects 20 Beijing Centre Court by Bligh Voller Nield Architecture 21 Constructed Object by Catherine Lassen Architecture in collaboration with Jasper Knight

>> models may sway and swarm slightly—an abundant field of activity on display. The result of this should be an exhibition that dramatically shows an enormous range of activity in the local profession; and does so via powerful visual and sensory experience—essential for gaining any traction in the Biennale context.

There will be great interest in seeing how the profession has responded to the invitation to take part. Some practices will have literally taken their latest model off the table, while others used the Biennale as an opportunity to reflect on the state of their own practice. Others have understood the potential of the exhibition and worked towards the most compelling objects they could produce.

Thus, within a global arrangement of some 300 objects (which may be all that the visiting world will register) we will see something altogether

different—the internal workings of our peers and the continual repositioning we make relative to each other on a continual basis. The possibility exists that the exhibition works as a two-way mirror, a projection to the world and a moment of introjection as we reflect upon ourselves.

If the exhibition even comes close to its potential it will have been a worthy reintroduction of Australian architectural practice to the global community and ‘clears the decks’ in a conceptual sense, providing space for future curators to drill down, in more detail perhaps, into some of the many trajectories exposed in this moment. GERARD REINMUTH

*Venice Architecture Biennale opens 14 September to 23 November, 2008. Previews will be held on 11–13 September, 2008.*



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